

ORIGIN/ACTION

RM/R REP AF

ARA EUR FE

NEA CU INR

E P IO

FBO AID

AGR COM FRB

INT LAB TAR

TR XMB AIR

ARMY CIA NAVY

OSD USIA NSA

FBI NSG

1968 FEB 26 AM 8 59

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

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A 316

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NO.

HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

INFO : UNCINCSO FOR POLAD, Amembassies MANAGUA, SAN JOSE,
SAN SALVADOR, TEGUCIGALPA, DOB 26 7 15 AM 1968

FROM : Amembassy GUATEMALA

SUBJECT : Weekly Internal Security Report: Feb 19-22-1968

REF :

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATERS/AN
ANALYSIS BRANCH

DATE FEB 24 1968

BUREAU OF

INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

MAR 4 - 1968

1. No sooner did Congress ratify the extension of the State of Alert for another month, February 17, than the capital was subjected to another grisly series of incidents. The warehouses of the Aviatega airline and the air express customs office at La Aurora Airport burned to the ground on the 17th, at a possible cost of one million quetzals and the death of one customs employee. Sabotage is suspected but has not yet been publicly demonstrated. In the city alone, policemen were shot at on three different occasions but managed to come out ahead, wounding some assailants and arresting several (Guat 3436).

2. The most shocking crimes of the week remain unsolved at this writing. Chilean citizen Edward Wright Crowe, labor relations director of the American-owned IRCA railroad was shot to death by gunmen armed with automatic pistols on driving away from his home, February 21. His colleague and passenger, Fidelino Vargas Paz, was badly wounded. The killers appear to have been three young men, possibly students, who seized a taxi to do the job, then turned it back to its owner and got away. So far only the taxi driver has been held for questioning. (Guat 3414)

3. Early the same day, time bombs damaged two police cars parked near the homes of Judicial Police Chief Estuardo GARCIA Gómez and Chief Justice Justo Rufino MORALES, respectively. The occupants of the one of the cars were walking their beat and escaped death, but one of their colleagues in the other car was killed. The two incidents were clearly coordinated since the bombs went off almost simultaneously. Those responsible have not been found (Guat 3435).

Encl.: List of Incidents

FORM
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REASON(S)

ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS

DECLASSIFIED/RELEASABLE

RELEASE CONTROL

PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

DECLASSIFIED

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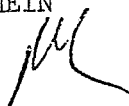
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4. In spite of the upsurge of violence, GOG authorities continued to assure the populace that the terrorist threat was under control and becoming less and less dangerous. They claimed to have collected all kinds of names and incriminating evidence during the State of Alert and to have redoubled their efforts to keep out contraband arms (Guat 3436).

5. The last of the men considered "common criminals" by the Guatemalan government but granted asylum as "political" fugitives by foreign embassies was granted safe conduct and left the country February 21. This was Hector Rodolfo SANDOVAL Alegría who was convicted of killing a National Policeman and other crimes and managed to obtain refuge in the Mexican Embassy last August. The Mexicans stuck to their interpretation of his status, and, on the basis of 1933 Montevideo Convention, were permitted to send Sandoval to Mexico. (See Weekly Report: 8/11-17/67, A-94.)

6. There were no incidents outside Guatemala City that appeared to have national political significance.

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Enclosure 1

LIST OF INCIDENTS

- Feb. 16 - Enrique Jimenez Estrada arrested for possessing communist propaganda material, in capital.
- 16 - Five men invade home of mayor of San Andrés Villa Seca, Retalhuleu, wound son, steal money, kidnap mayor.
- 16 - Personnel manager of textile firm, Jorge Arango, almost kidnapped by two men with machine guns in capital. Motive unclear. May or may not be relation of Julio Arango, kidnapped last week and still missing.
- 17 - Thread factory in Chimaltenango burns ~~down~~. No suggestion of sabotage.
- 17 - Warehouses of Aviateca airline and air express customs office at Aurora Airport, capital, burn down. One customs employee badly burned. Estimated damage: Q 1 million. Police suspect sabotage but have not revealed evidence or names.
- 18 - Military police unit raids suspected PGT/FAR "safe-house." Ensuing gun battle attracts National Policemen who were not informed of military plan. Despite confusion, four suspects captured, one wounded; no GOG casualties.
- 18 - Policeman shot at from passing car in capital's Zone 1, wounded. Bystander and presumably two assailants, who escaped, wounded also.
- 19 - Military police capture six accused of subversive activity in Tiquisate, Escuintla, announce capture of another in Jalpatagua, Jutiapa, Feb. 15.
- 19 - One Jorge Roderico de la Roca Castillo wounded after attacking police unit on Avenida Bolívar, capital, area of Feb. 18 incident.
- 20 - José Pedro Casteñeda Hernández machinegunned to death in Esquipulas, Chiquimula. Motive unknown.
- 20 - Comisionado Militar attacked by individual in Camotán, Chiquimula, kills assailant. Motive unclear.
- 21 - Edward W. Crowe, Chilean labor relations director of American-owned IRCA railroad shot to death when automatic pistols on leaving home. Colleague Fidelino Vargas Paz badly wounded. Killers apparently young men, case still open.

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